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RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH PRIORITY 0030  
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO PRIORITY 0017  
RUEHTI/AMEMBASSY TIRANA PRIORITY 0079  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 07 KUWAIT 000816

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, EB/ESC/TFS; NSC FOR KIFAYAT, TREASURY  
FOR A/S PATRICK O'BRIEN, DANIEL HARRIS, AND BENJAMIM DAVIS;  
S/CT FOR MONOSSON; AMMAN FOR GRANT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/22/2017  
TAGS: [KTFN](#) [EFIN](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)  
SUBJECT: TERRORIST FINANCE: GOK RELEASES RIHS FINDINGS

REF: A. KUWAIT 808  
[1](#)B. STATE 53274  
[1](#)C. 06 STATE 146295

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) On May 19, Embassy Kuwait received a long-promised report from the MFA (drafted by the Department of Follow-up and Coordination headed by Khalid Al-Maqamis) containing the findings of its investigation into the international activities of the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS). The thick dossier, mostly in Arabic, includes a cover note outlining RIHS activities in ten countries in which the U.S. has raised particular concerns about RIHS: Bangladesh, Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Somalia, Azerbaijan, and Russia. The file contains tabs with supporting documentation and photos purporting to show RIHS' many good works abroad. Among them is a copy of a letter of endorsement of RIHS activities from the Bosnian Minister of the Displaced Persons and Refugees, Edin Music (referred to through the report as the Ministry of Immigration), a translation of which will be provided septel.

[1](#)2. (S/NF) An Embassy translation of the 12-page executive summary follows:

Begin text:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Coordination and Follow-Up Department

May 16, 2007

MFA Dip Note # 20070796

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait presents its compliments to U.S. Embassy Kuwait.

In reference to U.S. Embassy Kuwait's Diplomatic Note No. 100, dated March 1, 2006, containing information about Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) offices supporting and funding terrorist functions in Bangladesh, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia,

Somalia, Azerbaijan, and Russia.

The Ministry would like to inform the Embassy that it has given the subject the necessary importance in order to maintain the reputation of charitable works and keep charitable works away from any cause harming their humanitarian aims and purposes.

The Ministry is pleased to enclose herein the response to the Embassy's aforementioned Diplomatic Note, and hopes this response will find the necessary consideration and understanding.

The Ministry avails itself of this opportunity to express its highest considerations.

#### Introduction

- The Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) was founded and established on December 27, 1981.

- RIHS is subject to Ministry of Social Affairs & Labor (MOSAL) supervision, in accordance with Law No. 24/1962. There is a department within MOSAL that has direct responsibility for charitable organizations called the Department of Charitable and Philanthropic Organizations which was founded in 2002.

- RIHS carries out its humanitarian activities and works abroad through the following six (6) committees:

1) Arab World Committee

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2) Africa Committee

3) South Asia Committee

4) India Committee

5) Middle Asia Committee

6) Europe and Americas Committee

- RIHS Board of Directors consists of seven (7) persons, all of whom are Kuwaiti volunteers dedicated to charitable and humanitarian work. The Board of Directors is chaired by Engineer Tareq Al-Eissa.

#### Regarding Allegations about RIHS' Office in Bangladesh

- RIHS' office in Bangladesh has carried out numerous humanitarian, charitable, and medical works. It has also published dozens of press materials and books that warn against extremism, atheism, and terrorism. In addition, the heralds (persons who work on Da'awa) and imams assigned by RIHS' office have held lectures and fora addressing the impact of these issues and showing the sin (religious prohibition) of disobeying the ruler. In this regard, the office held a large forum on December 4, 2005, in coordination with Religious Affairs Department at the Bangladeshi Ministry of Interior, talking about terrorism and its threats. There was media coverage for that forum (Attachment 1).

- Bangladeshi regulations for charity works were applied to RIHS' office, including providing an annual account statement audited by an authenticated law office. RIHS also obtained copies of its bank statements from the National Bank of Bangladesh to monitor withdrawals, and final account settlements have been kept for reference and audit purposes whenever needed.

- Allegation of a pre-existing relation with "Ahl Al-Hadeeth" Society: said Society was founded in 1947, while RIHS was founded in 1981.

- Leaders of terrorist attacks in Bangladesh were arrested in August 2005. The Bangladeshi Minister of Interior announced in a press conference that those terrorists are not related to any entity abroad. (Attachment 2; press statement by Bangladeshi Minister of Interior).

- Some RIHS personnel travel to Bangladesh through official channels after obtaining entry visas from the Bangladeshi Embassy in Kuwait, to follow up RIHS' projects and check on orphans sponsored by Kuwaiti people.

- Bangladesh enjoys freedom of the press, and RIHS has placed its responses to the accusations in many newspapers. RIHS' office has also initiated lawsuits against these accusations.

- RIHS' office has been granted another 5 years to operate upon consent issued by the NGO Office which falls under the Cabinet Council, starting from November 16, 2006. (Attachment 3).

- Attachment (4): Copy of annual account statement for 2004, approved and authenticated by the legal auditor.

- Attachment (5): Published book on anti-terrorism.

- Attachment (6): Bangladeshi Minister of Interior's speech addressed to the Bangladeshi PM, praising the projects and activities of RIHS' office.

- MFA-Kuwait never received negative remarks from the concerned Bangladeshi authorities regarding the projects and activities of RIHS' office there.

(Embassy Comment: We have requested an appointment with Al-Maqamis to brief him personally on the decision by the

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Bangladeshi authorities to withdraw RIHS's license as of May 18. End Comment.)

RIHS' Office in Bosnia & Herzegovina

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- RIHS started sending aid to the Bosnian people at the beginning of 1992 by providing shelter to refugees and immigrants of all nationalities and religions; providing in-kind, cash, and medical relief; sponsoring orphans; and constructing and restoring schools, hospitals and mosques. After the war was over, RIHS' aid focused on re-opening factories and reconstructing roads through concerned governmental institutions and ministries.

- RIHS' office was deemed the only Arab office working in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- Attachment (7): RIHS official registration document in Bosnia & Herzegovina, allowing the office to work in a number of locations and cities in Bosnia.

- RIHS' office accounts are subject to the supervision of an international and approved audit bureau (BF Agency Za Financije) which is recognized by the concerned Bosnian authority. In addition, RIHS has had an account at Volks Bank since 2002.

- RIHS' office cooperates and coordinates with the Bosnian Ministry of Immigration, the Ministry of Interior, the Financial Police, and the Islamic Sheikdom in Sarajevo. It can be confirmed that those entities were fully aware of RIHS' office activities from Mr. Edin Music, Minister of Displaced Persons and Refugees, who has requested that RIHS' office continue its activities in serving immigrants. (Attachment 8).

- RIHS' office is still working in Bosnia and has contacted

the concerned authorities in Bosnia to see if they would like it to cease operations. These authorities (Ministry of Immigrants) requested RIHS' office to pursue its charitable works and services to the Bosnian People. (Attachment 9).

- RIHS has received a letter from the office of Dr. Haris Silajdzic, former Bosnian PM, responding to RIHS' letter, in which he praised RIHS works and activities in Bosnia. (Attachment 10).

- All personnel at RIHS' office are of Bosnian nationality, and there are no Arab personnel in the office. It can be confirmed through registration books at Ministry of Immigrants.

- RIHS received another letter from Mr. Edin Music on March 29, 2007, requesting RIHS to continue its works and activities on behalf of immigrants. Also, he affirmed that RIHS is respecting regulations governing relief work and has obtained the necessary permission to implement its relief programs, and submitted the necessary reports on these programs according to the pertinent regulations.

- RIHS' office has received a number of thank you and appreciation letters from official and private entities in Bosnia for the charitable works and projects that have been carried out by the office. (Attachment 11).

- The Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs has never received any negative remarks from Bosnian authorities regarding RIHS' works and activities in Bosnia.

(Embassy comment: the MFA sidesteps the fact that Bosnian police raided RIHS offices in Bosnia in December 2006. End Comment.)

#### RIHS' Office in Albania

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- RIHS' office was registered at the Ministry of Justice in Albania on April 14, 2005. (Attachment 12).

- RIHS' office was shut down on May 20, 2005, upon the Government of Albania's request as it requested of all other Arab charitable societies.

- RIHS' office was sponsoring 1350 orphans and carrying out a number of charitable and humanitarian projects which were later handed over to Tirana authorities. RIHS' office was run according to the governing regulations and laws in Albania by seven (7) Albanian personnel, no Arab personnel, and no cooperation with any other charitable society there.

- RIHS' office was cooperating and coordinating with the Islamic Sheikdom in Tirana and the Head of the Religious Committee as it was well known to and approved by Albanian authorities.

- RIHS' office accounts were subject to audit by the concerned Albanian authorities. RIHS also has an account at Raiffeisen Bank - Albania.

- The Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs has never received any negative remarks from Albanian authorities regarding RIHS' works and activities there.

#### RIHS' Office in Kosovo

- RIHS was registered in Kosovo on September 22, 2000 through European-International Forces (UNMOFIK). (Attachment 13).

- RIHS sponsored 1200 orphans. There were eight (8)

personnel, all of Kosovo nationality, none of whom were Arab.

- RIHS' office accounts are subject to an international audit bureau approved by the concerned Kosovo authorities (AGeem Rajeb Bai).
- RIHS' office coordinates and cooperates with the Islamic Sheikhdome in Kosovo, as it was well known to the regional supervisory authorities.
- The Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs has never received any negative remarks from the regional supervisory authorities regarding RIHS' office works and activities there.

#### RIHS' Office in Indonesia

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- RIHS' office has been working in Indonesia since 1983, legally, officially and with approval of the concerned Jakarta authorities.
- RIHS' office operates in several governorates in Indonesia, i.e. West Java, Jogjakarta in Central Java, and East Java.
- RIHS' office deals with Mandiri Cabank Bank - Jakarta located in Jatinegara Timur City, and its accounts are annually audited by the concerned departments in Indonesia.
- All RIHS' office projects, i.e. mosques, Islamic centers, health units, water wells, and sponsorship of orphans, are licensed and approved by the concerned authorities in Indonesia.
- In reference to what was mentioned that Mr. Mohammed Hafi has relations with RIHS' office, the said person works at the Indonesian Supreme Council for Islamic Da'awa - Relief Section, which is an NGO. There is cooperation and coordination between RIHS' office and the Supreme Council to deliver aid to the areas afflicted by the political fight in Kings Island, Aceh governorate, and Central Sulawesi in 2001.

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- RIHS' office definitely has no relation with Al-Qaeda or Islamic groups, or any other terrorist or extremist groups. In support of this, there was no accusation driven by Indonesian authorities against RIHS' office. Furthermore, all RIHS' office personnel are Indonesians, except for one Jordanian accountant who works legally and officially with approval from the concerned Indonesian authorities.
- RIHS' office received a thank you letter from the Religious Affairs Department in Indonesia on November 16, 2006, for its valuable contribution to the success of a special forum to combat terrorism through religious awareness in Indonesia, which was held on August 25, 2005 in middle Java region. (Attachment 14).
- RIHS' office deals with a number of humanitarian and charitable societies and institutions in Indonesia, i.e. the Islamic Heritage Council, the "Istiqama" (straightness) Institution, and the Honafa Institution, all of which are recognized by the concerned Indonesian authorities.
- The Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs has never received any negative remarks from Indonesian authorities regarding RIHS' works and activities there.

#### RIHS' Office in Thailand

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- RIHS' office has been operating in Thailand since 1992, legally, officially, and licensed by the concerned Thai authorities. (Attachment 15).

- Attachment 16: Letter from General Jaollette Yun Jay Yut, Deputy PM, dated February 16, 2004, on the occasion of handing over the Orphans Care building in Tartiat State.
- Attachment 17: Statement of Mr. Adessy Fotarama'i, Minister of Education, on the occasion of handing over the Orphans Care building in Tartiat State on February 16, 2004.
- Attachment 18: Thank you and appreciation letter from Mr. Anot Mon Wiget, Chief Mowang Natiat, dated November 6, 2006.
- Attachment 19: Statement of Mr. Anorat Jorimat, Protocol Minister, on the occasion of RIHS' office opening ceremony.
- RIHS' office is located in the south of the Naratiat region, and works in a number of main areas, i.e. Naratiat State, Fatani State, Stoul State, Tac State, and Banja State.
- RIHS' office, since its works started, has been headed by Mr. Mohammed Dolt, who is Thai, and is approved by the concerned Thai authorities.
- RIHS' office deals with a number of official Thai banks: Islamic Bank of Thailand, Sdellale (Field 57A) Bene-BA, Bangkok - Thailand
- RIHS' office accounts are being audited by the assigned accountant and by RIHS' audit bureau in Kuwait.
- RIHS' office deals with a number of humanitarian and charitable societies and institutions in Thailand, i.e. the Islamic Charitable Committee for Social and Educational Services, the Nartiat Muslims Society, the Islamic Charitable Committee for Higher Education Affairs, and the Religious Science Institute. All of these institutions are recognized by the concerned Thai authorities.
- All RIHS' office projects, i.e. mosques, Islamic Centers, health units, water wells, and the sponsorship of orphans, are approved and licensed officially by the concerned Thai authorities.
- The Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs has never received any negative remarks from Thai authorities regarding RIHS'

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works and activities there.

#### RIHS' Office in Cambodia

- RIHS' office has operated in Cambodia since 1994, legally, officially, and licensed by the concerned Cambodian authorities (Attachment 20).
- RIHS' office is located in Finom governorate, and operates in a number of areas there, i.e. Finom B, Kong K, East Cambodia, and Jeminic.
- Since its opening, RIHS' office has been headed by Mr. Mohamed bin Yousif, a Cambodian national, approved by the concerned Cambodian authorities.
- RIHS' office deals with Krung Thai Bani, and Public Company Limited.
- RIHS' office accounts are being audited by the assigned accountant and by RIHS' audit bureau in Kuwait.
- RIHS' office deals with the Cambodian Islamic Society, which is recognized by the concerned Cambodian authorities.
- All RIHS' office projects, i.e. mosques, Islamic Centers, health units, water wells, and the sponsorship of orphans, are approved and licensed officially by the concerned

Cambodian authorities.

- Mr. Hanbali has no relation with RIHS' office. The office has never supported Al-Qaeda. There is no relation between RIHS' office personnel and any terrorist or extremist groups. There has been no correspondence with any extremist or fanatic entities.

- The Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs has never received any negative remarks from Cambodian authorities regarding RIHS' works and activities there.

#### RIHS' Office in Somalia

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- RIHS has had no office in any Somali city or region since RIHS' office in Mogadishu was shut down in 1995 for security reasons.

- RIHS operations in Somalia are exclusively dedicated to orphan sponsorship through cooperation with 9 well-known societies. RIHS sponsors 1434 orphans, both male and female, in coordination with the Somali Embassy in Kuwait, which also supervises the money transfers to the Somali charitable societies and institutions.

- RIHS has never supported or assisted the extremist Islamic Union in Somalia, nor any terrorist or extremist groups in Somalia, since it is not in keeping with RIHS' message calling to people with goodwill advice and not using the means of killers and terrorists. Somali authorities praised RIHS works and activities as mentioned by Dr. Adam Mohammed Nour, Minister of Justice, in a letter dated November 7, 2006, in which he commended the charitable works carried out by RIHS in Somalia, and affirmed the honesty of such works and activities. (Attachment 21)

- Somali charitable societies issued a statement on November 7, 2006 praising RIHS' role. In addition, on November 5, 2006 the Somali Embassy in Kuwait commended RIHS' role in helping needy and poor people in Somalia. (Attachment 22).

- Attachment 23: Somalia Embassy Kuwait's Diplomatic Note dated November 5, 2006 indicated that all RIHS' office works in Somalia have been carried out honestly and transparently, noting RIHS' humanitarian role in helping the afflicted Somali people.

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#### RIHS' Office in Azerbaijan

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- RIHS' office has been operating in Azerbaijan since 1994, legally, officially, and licensed by the concerned Azerbaijani authorities (Ministry of Justice).

- RIHS' office practices and functions in different governorates and cities in Azerbaijan, i.e. Baku, Ismaeiliya, Aksou, Al-Shamikhli, Kazakh, and Nakar Nokrabakh region.

- RIHS' office has been headed by Mr. Mohammed Al-Shamri, a Kuwaiti national approved by the concerned Azerbaijani authorities, since its operations and activities started.

- All RIHS' office projects, i.e. mosques, Islamic Centers, health units, water wells, and the sponsorship of orphans, are approved and licensed officially by concerned Azerbaijan authorities in addition to relief projects and works for Kazakh refugees.

- All RIHS' office personnel are Azerbaijani nationals, except for the office manager, an Algerian national, approved by the Azerbaijan authorities concerned, and he is still residing in Azerbaijan.

- Some Azerbaijani officials participated in inaugurating some of RIHS' office charitable projects and works, i.e. renewing hospital wards, and restoring orphan shelters in Baku.
- RIHS' office sponsored 1600 orphans upon the Azerbaijan Ministry of Education's request.
- Attachment 24: Sebile Region Court's decision, on November 3, 2001, proves that RIHS' office in Azerbaijan has no relation with the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S., nor with any other radical group, and the office can resume its activities and works again.
- None of RIHS' office personnel had a role in or relation to recruiting military volunteers to fight against Russian forces in Chechnya in December 2003, which is against RIHS' clear and honest principles of condemning violence, terrorist operations, and random bombings in any place of the world.

#### RIHS' Office in Russia

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- RIHS has no office in Moscow or any Russian city or governorate, but there were charitable works and projects in cooperation and coordination with Russian Ministry of Emergency, and sometimes these projects were upon the request of the concerned Russian authorities.
- Regarding Russia's designation of RIHS as a terrorist organization among a list of 17 terrorist organizations banned in Russia, this matter was discussed with the concerned Russian authorities to provide the Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs with evidence. Also, this decision is being reviewed by the concerned Russian authorities.

End text.

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